



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BAPCHULE MAN SENTENCED TO 40 YEARS FOR 2nd DEGREE MURDER AND KIDNAPPING

PHOENIX – Melvin Pedro, 29, of Bapchule, Ariz., was sentenced on May 21 to 480 months prison, by U.S. District Judge Roslyn O. Silver. Pedro pleaded guilty on December 19, 2006, to 2nd Degree Murder and Kidnapping.

Pedro was one of two men who beat and then kidnapped a man in May 2006 on the Gila River Indian Reservation. Pedro and co-defendant Loren James, 38, drove the victim to a remote area of the desert and then repeatedly beat and kicked him. The two men beat and stabbed the victim with a tire iron and then left him in the desert to die. The beating was especially cruel and heinous as the victim lingered for a long period of time during the beating, such that the defendants yelled at him, “why won’t you die?” as they continued to beat him. The victim pleaded for his life and pleaded with Pedro’s girlfriend (the victim’s cousin) to help save him. The girlfriend allegedly feared for her own life and did not help the victim but reported the crime to the police.

The autopsy showed the victim suffered several fractures to the bones in his face and chest as well as stab wounds (from the tire iron) to his chest. Co-defendant James had previously been sentenced to 180 months in prison.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Gila River Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution was handled by Sharon K. Sexton, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-513-PHX-ROS
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